



Guidance on Requesting Death Certificates from Families

ODP Announcement 24-098 UPDATE

AUDIENCE:

Administrative Entities (AEs), Supports Coordination Organizations (SCOs), Intellectual Disability/Autism (ID/A) Providers, incident reporters and investigators, and all interested stakeholders.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this announcement is to provide guidance when requesting death certificates from family members in relation to death incident reports and investigations.

DISCUSSION:

Incident Management Bulletin 00-21-02 Section IV b. states that when an individual is deceased, the point person must ensure the final section of the incident report is supplemented by a copy of the following:

- Lifetime medical history
- Copy of the Death Certificate

- Autopsy report, as applicable
- Discharge summary from the final hospitalization if the individual died while hospitalized
- Results of the most recent physical examination
- Most recent health and medical assessments
- A copy of the entire investigation file completed by the provider or SCO

While the inclusion of a death certificate in an incident report is preferred, to ensure a complete record, the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) acknowledges the potential burden this request may place on grieving families. When it becomes necessary for an incident point person, a designated investigator, a supports coordinator, or any other responsible party to request a death certificate from the family or next of kin the request should be made only once. If the death certificate is not received by the time the responsible party is ready to finalize the incident report, the report should be finalized without the death certificate. No extensions should be requested or applied due to the absence of a death certificate.

ODP expects the responsible party to document the attempt to obtain the death certificate including the date and time of the request and the name of the individual contacted. This information **must** be recorded in the final section of the incident report, specifically the Additional Information and Optional Categorization screen. See screenshot below. **This information must be included for the incident to be approved.**

It is important to note that the absence of a death certificate, under these circumstances, does not warrant a disapproval by reviewers. ODP encourages responsible parties to exercise good judgment and sensitivity when making such requests to families.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Visit the www.MyODP.org website to access Incident Management Bulletin 00-02-21 and attachments, resources, ODP announcements, and other additional ODP Incident Management trainings.